sets of negative tests for TV and other STDs at one and three week intervals following treatment. Her casual consort in London was untraceable.

T. vaginalis is a cosmopolitan flagellate of the genital organs in adults. Transmission occurs primarily through sexual intercourse as the parasite has no resistant stage. Infection is commonly symptomless in the male and produces a severe vaginitis in the female. There is little evidence to support direct female to female transmission resulting from poor standards of sanitation and hygiene. Whittington\(^1\) showed that the *Trichomonas vaginalis* organism in vaginal exudate can survive up to 48 hours when maintained at 10\(^\circ\)C. Hesseltine et al. (1942)\(^2\) produced the clinical entity of vaginal trichomoniasis by inoculation of the human vagina with vaginal trichomonads.

We believe this is the first reported case of *Trichomonas vaginalis* infection acquired probably in a lesbian relationship transmitted from partner's vaginal exudates through masturbating fingers.

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R Basu Roy

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References

1 Whittington MJ. The survival of *Trichomonas vaginalis* at temperatures below 37\(^\circ\)C. J Hyg Epidemiol Microbiol Immunol 1951;49:400.


TO THE EDITOR, Genitourinary Medicine

Falling prevalence of *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection among female patients attending the Department of Genito-Urinary Medicine, Bournemouth

Sir,

Over the last 5 years we have noticed a significant fall in the prevalence of chlamydia infection among female patients attending our department. It has fallen from 14-57% culture positives in 1984 to 3-23% in the first six months of 1989. A national fall in the prevalence of syphilis, gonorrhoea and *Chlamydia trachomatis* infections have been reported before.\(^1\) We feel this fall is mainly due to change of sexual behaviour as a result of the AIDS epidemic, health education, effective treatment, contact tracing and epidemiological treatment of female consorts of male patients with non-specific urethritis. *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and particularly *Chlamydia trachomatis* cause 40-70% of pelvic inflammatory disease in the western world.\(^2\) If this trend in the falling prevalence of *Chlamydia trachomatis* and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* infections continues, we expect to see fewer cases of pelvic inflammatory disease as well as its complications in the future. The falling incidence of sexually transmitted diseases, particularly of *Trachomonas vaginalis*, gonorrhoea, *Chlamydia trachomatis*, confirms that the heterosexuals also have modified their sexual behavioural response, contrary to reports in the national press.

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References


TO THE EDITOR, Genitourinary Medicine

Declining incidence of *Chlamydia trachomatis* in women attending a provincial genitourinary medicine clinic

Sir,

Endocervical cultures for *Chlamydia*

Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1985</th>
<th>1986</th>
<th>1987</th>
<th>1988</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total new attenders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number screened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonococcal isolates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C trachomatis isolates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correspondence

*trachomatis* and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* are offered to all women attending the Department of Genitourinary Medicine in Newcastle. In a retrospective study the incidence of these two infections in women during 1985 to 1988 were compared as shown in the table. The new isolates of *C trachomatis* and *N gonorrhoeae* declined steadily over the four year period, while the number of women screened for these two infections remained fairly stable. The incidence of *Chlamydia trachomatis* has fallen from 174/1000 in 1985 to 71/1000 in 1988. A similar decrease in gonorrhoea has already been reported in London.\(^1\) Our observations in Newcastle show a parallel trend in these two sexually transmitted infections which are acquired by unprotected penetrative sexual intercourse. These findings are suggestive of changes in sexual behaviour in women attending a genito-urinary medicine clinic.

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Reference

1 Whittington MJ. The survival of *Trichomonas vaginalis* at temperatures below 37\(^\circ\)C. J Hyg Epidemiol Microbiol Immunol 1951;49:400.

Falling prevalence of Chlamydia trachomatis infection among female patients attending the Department of Genito-urinary Medicine, Bournemouth.

K Sivakumar and R B Roy

*Genitourin Med* 1989 65: 400
doi: 10.1136/sti.65.6.400

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